During the dark days of the early 1940's, a covert military experiment turned Steve Rogers into America's first Super-Soldier, CAPTAIN AMERICA.

Throughout the war, Cap and his partner Bucky fought alongside our infantry and with a group of heroes known as the Invaders. In the closing months of WWII, Captain America and Bucky were both presumed dead in an explosion over the English Channel.

Decades later, a figure was found trapped in ice, and Captain America was revived. Having slept through more than half of the 20th century, Steve Rogers awakened to a world he never imagined, a world where war had moved from the battlefield to the city streets...

THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN AMERICA

ACT 2

THE BURDEN OF DREAMS: PART FIVE

Steve Rogers, Captain America, is dead. The Red Skull, with the help of megalomaniacal psychiatrist Dr. Faustus, manipulated Sharon Carter, former Agent 13 of S.H.I.E.L.D. into taking the life of the man she loved. Now, Sharon is held prisoner, both physically and mentally, by her enemies.

Cap's former partner James "Bucky" Barnes has agreed to don the mantle of Captain America and go after the Red Skull. However, Aleksander Lukin, the ex-Soviet General whose mind the Red Skull has secretly been sharing, appears to have died in a plane crash. Meanwhile, Lukin's Kronas Corporation is making moves that rock the American economy. Citizens have taken to the streets in protest, and while Bucky takes down agents of A.I.M. and A.R.A.D., mind-controlled S.H.I.E.L.D. agents open fire on a crowd of protestors. Things are quickly spiraling out of control...

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Upstate New York
TONY, I THINK I GOT SOMETHING.
WHAT IS IT, SAM?
LOOKS LIKE AN ABANDONED REHAB CLINIC OR SOMETHING... FEW HOURS UPSTATE.
AND ACCORDING TO MY SOURCES, DR. FAUSTUS WAS HERE RECENTLY...
ANY SIGN OF AGENT 13?
NO, BUT HE WASN'T ON HIS OWN.

THE LOCAL BIRDS SAW FAUSTUS AND SOME WORKMEN LOADING UP A TRUCK.
OKAY. THAT'S GOOD NEWS. WHEN WAS THAT?
HARD TO SAY...BIRDS DON'T HAVE THE SAME CONCEPT OF TIME AS WE DO.
REDWING THINKS IT CAN'T BE MORE THAN A FEW DAYS, THOUGH...
YOU WANT TO GET A TEAM UP HERE TO TEAR THIS PLACE APART? FIND OUT WHAT THEY WERE AFTER?
I WISH I COULD, BUT I'VE GOT INTERVIEWS WITH EVERY AGENCY IN THE U.S. TODAY.
AND ALL S.H.I.E.L.D. OPS IN THE STATES ARE CURRENTLY ON HOLD.
SO WE'RE BASICALLY RIGHT WHERE THE RED SKULL WANTS US TO BE?
NOT YET. I'M GOING TO TALK MY WAY AROUND THIS, SAM...I'M NOT GETTING SHUT DOWN.
SO, WHAT DO I DO? SHARON'S ON HER OWN OUT THERE.
CONTACT NATASHA. SHE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO...AND STAY OFF-RADAR FOR NOW.
RIGHT.
DIRECTOR STARK?
YES?
THEY'RE READY FOR YOU NOW.

AND THE NATION CONTINUES TO REACT TO LAST NIGHT'S BRUTAL AND TRAGIC INCIDENT... WHEN S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENTS OPENED FIRE ON PROTESTERS OUTSIDE THE WHITE HOUSE...
POLICE DO NOT CROSS
ROSEANNE McCARTHY
TRAGEDY AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WHILE S.H.I.E.L.D. HAS YET TO MAKE A STATEMENT, INSIDE SOURCES ARE INDICATING DIRECTOR STARK WILL CLAIM THAT LAST NIGHT'S SHOOTERS WERE NOT ACTIVE AGENTS.
BUT EARLIER TODAY, SENATOR GORDON WRIGHT, CHAIRMAN OF THE DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, ADDRESSED CONCERNS ON THE HILL...
ROSEANNE MCCARTHY
S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENTS KILL TWELVE, WOUND TWENTY-THREE

OUR CURRENT CRISIS HAS ONLY BEEN ESCALATED BY LAST NIGHT'S SHOOTING, AND SO OUR CONCERNS FALL TO THE SECURITY OF OUR NATION'S CAPITAL.
SENATOR GORDON WRIGHT

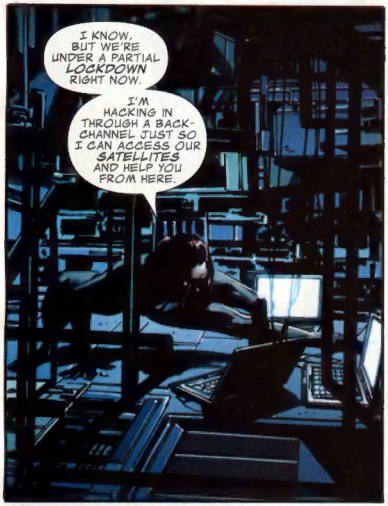
SINCE A LARGE NUMBER OF OUR NATIONAL GUARD ARE OVERSEAS, I'VE AUTHORIZED A TEMPORARY CONTRACT WITH KANE-MEYER SECURITIES TO KEEP OUR CITY SAFE.
SENATOR GORDON WRIGHT

KANE-MEYER WILL BE GUARDING WASHINGTON D.C. TONIGHT AND EVERY NIGHT UNTIL WE CAN RESTORE ORDER TO OUR STREETS... AND TO THE HEART OF THIS GREAT NATION.
SENATOR GORDON WRIGHT

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME A PRIVATE FIRM WILL BE SECURING A CITY ON U.S. SOIL. HOWEVER, KANE-MEYER PERFORM THIS SERVICE FOR MANY AMERICAN HOLDINGS OVERSEAS...
ROSEANNE McCARTHY
TRAGEDY AT THE WHITE HOUSE

--FOR MANY AMERICAN HOLDINGS OVERSEAS...
WELL, I THOUGHT THAT WENT WELL, DIDN'T YOU?
YES, YOU WERE QUITE THE PICTURE OF AN IMPASSIONED LEADER, SENATOR WRIGHT.
AND YOU WILL BE REWARDED FOR IT, BELIEVE ME.
OF COURSE, DOCTOR. OF COURSE I BELIEVE YOU.
BUT IT'S GOING TO GET DARKER BEFORE THE DAWN, MY FRIEND... AND YOU HAD BETTER BE PREPARED FOR THAT...
A NEW AMERICAN MORNING.

--WE WANT?
ACCOUNTABILITY!
WHEN DO WE WANT IT?
NOW!
NATALIA...?
YES?
I'M STARTING TO THINK THOSE AGENTS LAST NIGHT WEREN'T UNDER MIND-CONTROL...
THAT'S NOT A VERY KIND THOUGHT, JAMES...
THESE RANTING WHACKOS JUST DROVE 'EM TO IT.
WE WANT ANSWERS!
THE USA DOESN'T SHOOT ITS CITIZENS!
WHO GAVE THEM DRUGS?
BLOOD ON YOUR HANDS
REAGEN NOW!!
REMEMBER, MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, THOSE PEOPLE ARE SCARED.
THEY SHOULD BE SCARED...THIS PLACE IS ON THE VERGE OF A RIOT.
WHERE ARE YOUR PEOPLE? IS THERE A PLAN?
UNFORTUNATELY, OUR PLAN RIGHT NOW IS YOU.
WHAT?! THIS IS A MOB SCENE...


I KNOW, BUT WE'RE UNDER A PARTIAL LOCKDOWN RIGHT NOW.
I'M HACKING IN THROUGH A BACK-CHANNEL JUST SO I CAN ACCESS OUR SATELLITES AND HELP YOU FROM HERE.

OKAY... WELL...DO WE HAVE ANY--
BOTTLED WATER, MISTER?

NO, THAT'S OKAY, KID.
CHIP BUTT

SO, DO WE HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT THEIR GOAL IS HERE...
...OTHER THAN JUST RANDOM CHAOS AND DESTRUCTION?
BOTTLED WATER, MA'AM?

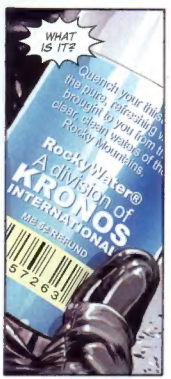
SOME IDEA, MAYBE... YES.
IT TOOK SOME DIGGING EVEN FOR OUR NETWORK, BUT IT TURNS OUT KANE-MEYER SECURITY IS OWNED BY A COMPANY THAT'S OWNED BY A COMPANY...

...THAT ABOUT TWENTY STEPS UP THE CHAIN IS OWNED BY THE KRONAS CORPORATION.
KRONAS CAUSES WIDESPREAD PANIC AND THEN THEIR OWN MEN ARE SENT IN TO PROTECT THE NATION'S CAPITOL BECAUSE OF IT?

YES...IT'S QUITE A SCAM. BUT TO WHAT PURPOSE?
THE RED SKULL'S JUST PULLING STRINGS... THIS IS ALL A DIVERSION.
A RIOT ABOUT TO HAPPEN, YOU SAID.

YEAH...BUT HOW DO YOU GUARANTEE A RIOT?

AH, HELL...


WHAT IS IT?
Quench your thirst with the pure, refreshing water brought to you from the clear, clean waters of the Rocky Mountains.
Rocky Water®
A division of
KRONOS
INTERNATIONAL
MEBERBRUND
5726

NO!
DOWN WITH SHIELD
NO! NO! NO!
CITIZENS
YOU DRUG THE CROWD...
THAT'S HOW YOU GUARANTEE A RIOT.
BLOOD ON YOUR

--AND FRANKLY, MR. MOROVIN, THERE'VE BEEN SUGGESTIONS YOUR PREDECESSOR GENERAL LUKIN ISN'T ACTUALLY DECEASED.
WOULD THOSE SUGGESTIONS BE FROM S.H.I.E.L.D., MR. SECRETARY?
BECAUSE THEY'VE HAD UNFOUNDED ACCUSATIONS AGAINST US IN THE PAST...
AND I WOULD HOPE THAT AFTER LAST NIGHT, YOU WOULD NOT BE LISTENING TO AGENCIES WHICH HAVE BEEN DISCREDITED.
NOT WHEN SO MUCH OF YOUR FINANCIAL WELL-BEING DEPENDS ON THIS DEAL.
NO, OF COURSE NOT...LET'S NOT LET THAT GET IN THE WAY OF BUSINESS, RIGHT?
BUSINESS IS MY LIFE, MR. SECRETARY.
I'LL HAVE MY PEOPLE DELIVER THE PROPOSAL BY MORNING.
I THINK YOU'LL AGREE THE NEW PRICE IS MORE THAN FAIR.
I TRULY HOPE SO, SIR.

GAAH...
...THIS IS NOT RIGHT, SKULL.
YOU'VE ALTERED MY PLANS BEYOND RECOGNITION.
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS.
I'M NOT. WE WERE MEANT TO CRIPPLE THEM...TO SHOW THE EMPTINESS OF THEIR CAPITALIST WAYS.
NOT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THEM.
OUR FINAL DESTINATION REMAINS THE SAME, ALEK...AND WE'VE CRIPPLED THEM ALREADY...
ARE THEIR PEOPLE NOT LIVING IN FEAR?
ARE THEIR CITIES NOT BURNING TONIGHT IN OUR HONOR?

IT STARTS SO QUICKLY THAT IT'S ALMOST SHOCKING.
BECAUSE THESE PEOPLE AREN'T ALL DRUGGED. THEY CAN'T BE.
BLOOD ON YOUR HANDS
RESIGN
RESIGN
NO!
DOWN WITH SHIELD!
NO! NO! NO!
WE WANT CIVIL LIBERTY
FREE SPEECH.
RESIGN NOW
WHERE'S TRUCE?
BUT WITH THE NOISE OF THE CROWD...AND THE ANGER...THE FEAR...
IT ONLY TAKES A FEW OF THEM WILLING TO GO TOO FAR.
IT ONLY TAKES A SPARK.

AND THEN IT ALL GOES STRAIGHT TO HELL.
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO HELP THESE PEOPLE?
I CAN'T LET MORE OF THEM DIE AS PAWNS IN THE RED SKULL'S GAME.
BUT HOW CAN ONE MAN HOLD BACK THIS MUCH CHAOS?

STEVE WOULD FIND A WAY.
I KNOW THAT.
AND HE WOULDN'T STOP TO QUESTION IT.
HE'D JUST DO IT SOMEHOW.
WHATEVER IT TOOK.
HE'D DO THE IMPOSSIBLE.

WHICH IS WHAT I HAVE TO DO NOW.
WHAM
AK!
UHH--
HEY? WHAT THE HELL?
GET OUT OF HERE. NOW.
OKAY, WHAT IS THE RED SKULL REALLY AFTER HERE? THAT'S WHAT I NEED TO FIGURE OUT.
THAT'S WHAT'S GOING TO HELP ME END THIS NONSENSE QUICKER.
USA

THAT AND SOME SLEEPING GAS.
PPPPPSSSSSSSHHHHHHHH
OBVIOUSLY THE SKULL WANTS TO MAKE KANE-MEYER LOOK GOOD HERE. BUT HOW?
BEATING ON PROTESTERS--EVEN IN WASHINGTON D.C.--ISN'T GOING TO LOOK TOO GOOD ON THE FIVE O'CLOCK NEWS.
THIS IS ALL A DIVERSION FOR HIS LARGER GOAL.

SO WHAT IS THE RIGHT HAND DOING WHILE THE LEFT HAND LIGHTS A FIRE?
NATALIA, YOU HAVE ANYTHING FOR ME YET?
I'M WORKING ON IT, JAMES.
THAT RIOT ISN'T EASY TO SORT THROUGH ON SAT-COM.
IT'S NO PICNIC ON THE GROUND, EITHER...
I'M SCANNING FOR BIG MOVEMENTS. JUST DO YOUR BEST UNTIL THEN.
RIGHT.
MY BEST.
PUT IT DOWN, YOU LITTLE FREAK!
OR I WILL SHOOT YOU IN THE FACE!
KA-WHAM
ENOUGH.

KRAKK
HALT!
STOP RIGHT THERE!
RATATATATATATAT
RATATATAT

SPLIT
WHUDD
WAKK
KRAK
DAMN.
I'M ACTUALLY GETTING PRETTY GOOD AT THIS.

Meanwhile...
AH GOOD, YOU'RE FINALLY BACK.
YES. I THINK THE SENATOR AND OUR PEOPLE CAN HANDLE IT FROM HERE ON IN...
...FOR TONIGHT, AT LEAST.
I WILL GIVE YOU ONE THING, FAUSTUS...
YOU ENGINEER A RIOT WITH THE BEST OF THEM.
PFFT... MAKING PEOPLE SCARED ENOUGH TO TURN AGAINST THEIR OWN INTERESTS IS CHILD'S PLAY.
TRUE... AND YOU EXCEL AT IT, STILL.
NOW, LET'S TALK ABOUT THE GIRL... ROGERS' WOMAN.
I WAS JUST ON MY WAY TO SEE HER, ACTUALLY.
YES, WELL...
WE'VE DECIDED SHE NEEDS CLOSER ATTENTION THAN YOU'VE BEEN PROVIDING.

JAMES--I MAY HAVE SOMETHING.
GOOD. WHAT IS IT?
I FEEL LIKE I'M SWATTING FLIES OUT HERE.
IT CAME IN SO FAST I NEARLY MISSED IT, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE A COPTER JUST LANDED ON THE ROOF OF THE SENATE OFFICES.
THAT'S GOT TO BE PART OF THE SKULL'S PLAN.
YEAH...IT'S A BIGGER TARGET, THAT'S FOR SURE.
KRAKK!
SCAN THE SENATE COMM. SYSTEM...I'M ON MY WAY...
BUT IT'D BE NICE TO KNOW WHAT I'M RUSHING INTO.
I'M ALREADY HACKING THROUGH THEIR SECURITY.

--REPEAT! WE HAVE MULTIPLE HOSTILES IN THE BUILDING! FOURTH FLOOR OFFICE CORRIDOR!
WE NEED HELP! I HAVE OFFICERS--
AAIIEEE!
ZAP
ZAP
ZAP
ALL RIGHT, LET'S MAKE IT LOOK GOOD.
AND BE SURE YOU DON'T TAKE OUT THOSE SECURITY CAMERAS.
SKKAASH

JAMES... ARE YOU THERE? WHAT IS IT?
IT'S NOTHING, NATALIA...
NOTHING I CAN'T HANDLE.
OH, YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME...
THIS IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.

WHA...?

WHAT'S--
HEY...WHAT
IS THIS?

JUST RELAX, WOMAN...THERE'S NO NEED TO STRUGGLE.
ARNIM ZOLA IS A DOCTOR, TOO...
STOP IT, SHARON. STOP BEING SCARED.
REMEMBER, YOU WORK FOR THEM NOW.

...BUT A DIFFERENT VARIETY THAN YOUR FRIEND FAUSTUS.
AND HOW LONG DID YOU REALLY THINK YOU COULD HIDE THIS PREGNANCY?
To Be Continued...

LOOK WHO'S TALKING!

AWARD-WINNING WRITER, & INTERVIEW PRO, ED BRUBAKER

MARVEL: *Ballpark, how many interviews have you done regarding Cap since Captain America #25?*

ED BRUBAKER: I would guess a few hundred, probably. The vast majority of them coming in that first week or two from the time the book hit. It was pretty intense, really, to be in the eye of the storm like that.

MARVEL: *Since starting your run on the book, you've really put a focus on Captain America, garnering industry and mainstream attention for some incredibly controversial moves. Was that intended from the onset?*

EB: All I ever intended was to just write a Captain America book that would be the kind of superhero/espionage comic that I'd personally like to read. I just wanted people to take the book seriously on its own terms and do some epic comic book action and drama. I was a bit nervous about how the reaction would be when the Winter Soldier was revealed to be Bucky, but I knew I had a good story, and hoped that would win over any controversy.

MARVEL: *You've done the impossible so far in your Captain America run at every turn. Are there any ideas that you've pitched for Cap that have been shot down?*

EB: Uhh... This is kind of scary, but no. Tom Brevoort's said yes to everything I've wanted to do.

MARVEL: *Moving to Daredevil, you have your second year wrapping up. After putting Matt in jail, busting him out, and driving his wife crazy, what can you possibly do to top yourself?*

EB: Wait, I have to top all that? I thought I'd just let Foggy take up the mantle for a while and see how he does while Matt cries in his coffee.

Or... maybe I'll bring in a few more villains and have a lot of murder and mayhem instead. I haven't decided yet.

MARVEL: *Daredevil has existed in his own corner of the Marvel Universe (Hell's Kitchen) for a while now. If you could integrate him into any part of the rest of the Universe, where do you think he'd best fit?*

EB: I think it might be time for Matt to branch out a bit and not just care about one "hood" as it were, actually. I think maybe he needs to move around in the city more, and maybe even go to Jersey now and then. Aren't all the mobsters in Jersey now? The one coolest thing about Daredevil is that he fits in any urban environment, the grittier the better, generally. I enjoy that aspect of the book a lot, and I like that in many ways *Daredevil* is its own little world.

MARVEL: *Along with Matt Fraction, you also brought a "cool" factor to a character many thought was a joke for a while – Iron Fist. What is it about your take that seems to have really finally clicked with audiences?*

EB: I think it must be all the crazy over-the-top pulp era kung fu. It's mostly on Matt Fraction and David Aja, really. I started out as a co-writer and plot-master on *Iron Fist*, and have slowly moved back more and more and let those guys just go nuts. I do work on every issue, still, and sometimes there's a line of dialogue that people think is from Matt that is actually from me, but Matt and David really deserve most of the credit. I co-plotted and sort of script-doctored or edited the second arc here and there, at most. All the new Immortal Weapons were invented by Matt, I just said there should be six other cities with their own heroes and we should have a big tournament.

MARVEL: *After 2 years on Uncanny X-Men, you now have the door wide open to take the team in your direction. Anything you can tease us on?*

EB: Let's just say, I don't think we'll be seeing them in class anytime soon, or rebuilding Xavier's Institute.I've probably said too much, haven't I?

MARVEL: *Finally, you have an Eisner-winning book, Criminal, under the Icon line. For those who know your work from the Marvel U but are not familiar with Criminal, can you give us a few words on the premise?*

EB: Criminal is me and Sean Phillips (the award-winning artist of Marvel Zombies) just tapping into our love of noir and crime fiction and bringing it to comics in our own way. We've created a huge cast of characters, most of them thieves and murderers, but sometimes just people forced into bad situations out of desperation and a need to survive. It's a bit like *Sin City*, in that you can read any of the stories and not know anything about the previous ones, but in *Criminal*, when people fall off rooftops and land on cars, they die a horrible death. I'd really urge readers who are fans of my or Sean's work to check it out, since we both think it's the best stuff we've ever done, and we won a bunch of awards for it last summer, including Best New Series.

'Nuff Said!